



Embassy of the United States of America

Partnerships for Progress



A U.S. Navy hospital corpsman examines a Haitian girl complaining of stomach pain at a clinic set up by the medical department of the amphibious dock-landing ship USS Carter Hall after the January 2010 major earthquake in Haiti. U.S. Navy/Monique Hilley

Most countries in the Americas share common concerns about organized crime and the spread of illicit drugs and weapons. President Obama has recommitted the United States to creating practical partnerships in the Western Hemisphere to advance shared interests and protect citizens.

“In the Americas today there are no senior partners and there are no junior partners; there are only equal partners,” Obama said in March 2011 in Santiago, Chile. “Of course, equal partnership, in turn, demands a sense of shared responsibility. We have obligations to each other.”

This strategy is grounded in shared responsibility for addressing the challenges; the critical importance of political will, rule of law and effective institutions of governance; and shared aspirations for secure, prosperous and inclusive societies.

President Obama has underscored the importance of reducing the demand for illegal drugs that fuels many of the transnational criminal organizations responsible for insecurity throughout the hemisphere.

U.S.-Mexico Agreement

The Mérida Initiative is an unprecedented partnership between the United States and Mexico to fight

organized crime and associated violence while furthering respect for human rights and the rule of law. It is based on principles of shared responsibility, mutual trust and respect for sovereign independence. These are the initiative’s four pillars:

Brazilian fishermen learn business automation.
USAid/Alex Araujo



- Disrupting organized crime.
- Strengthening institutions.
- Building a 21st-century border.
- Building strong, resilient communities.

The Mérida Initiative fights drug trafficking, organized crime, corruption, illicit arms trafficking, money laundering and demand for drugs on both sides of the border. It supports stronger democratic institutions, especially police, justice systems and civil society organizations.

The partnership expands border security beyond interdicting contraband to facilitating legal trade and travel and building strong communities on the U.S.-Mexico border. U.S. aid to Mexico is used many ways:

- Training police, prosecutors and defenders, and promoting correction systems reforms, judicial exchanges, and partnerships between Mexican and U.S. law schools.
- Supporting Mexico's new justice system, increasing respect for human rights, strengthening communities and social networks, helping young people and crime victims, and improving community-government cooperation.
- Providing eight Bell helicopters to Mexico's military and three UH-60M Black Hawk helicopters to the federal police for counterterrorism and other security needs.
- Supplying scanners, X-ray machines and similar equipment to detect illegal items at checkpoints and airports.

At the police academy in Mexico City, the Los Angeles Police Department and California Department of Justice trained officers in using bikes for patrol and crowd control. *AP Images*



Several Latin American countries have agreed to increase trade in crops like bananas. *AP Images*

Caribbean Basin Security

The United States and Caribbean nations are working through the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) to combat drug and other transnational crime. These are the goals:

- Substantially reduce drug trafficking.
- Increase public safety.
- Promote social justice.

Through CBSI, the United States also works with Caribbean Community (CARICOM) member states and the Dominican Republic, which have adopted a declaration of principles, action plan and framework for security cooperation. Working groups coordinate local, national and regional security activities and policies.

Central America Regional Security Initiative

Illicit activities, such as drug trafficking, access to firearms, local and transnational gangs and organized crime, threaten many Central American communities. Failure to solve these problems erodes citizens' trust in public officials.

The Central America Regional Security Initiative (CARSI) addresses these threats. Its purpose is to stop the flow of narcotics, weapons and excessive cash generated by illegal drug sales and to confront gangs and criminal organizations. CARSI aims to strengthen and integrate security from the U.S. Southwest border to

For additional information:

Remarks by President Obama on Latin America in Santiago, Chile

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/21/remarks-president-obama-latin-america-santiago-chile>

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton Remarks at the Central American Security Conference (SICA)

<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2011/06/166733.htm>

Partnerships for Progress: The Fact Sheets

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/03/21/partnerships-progress-fact-sheets>

Mérida Initiative

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/plrmo/157797.htm>

Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI)

<http://www.state.gov/p/wha/rls/fs/2011/158346.htm>

Central American Regional Security Initiative (CARSI)

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/plrmo/158242.htm>

Colombia Strategic Development Initiative (CSDI)

<http://www.state.gov/p/wha/rls/fs/2011/158620.htm>

Panama and the coastal waters of the Caribbean Sea. CARSI's five goals:

- Create safe streets.
- Disrupt the movement of criminals and contraband.
- Support strong, capable and accountable governments.
- Re-establish state presence in vulnerable communities.
- Foster cooperation among the nations to promote security and rule of law.

"Two decades ago it was Central Americans working closely together on a regional basis who ended civil wars, and it will be again Central Americans working together on a regional basis who will defeat the criminality and violence that renders your citizens insecure," U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton told Central American ministers in June 2011. "And we will be your partner as you define and lead the way forward."

Colombia Initiative

The Colombia Strategic Development Initiative (CSDI) builds on a decade-long fight against drug smugglers and insurgents and on Colombia's 2010 National Consolidation Plan (PNC) of development and reform. The PNC addresses rural poverty, violence, human rights and the needs of indigenous and other vulnerable groups. Colombia is concentrating military, counternarcotics, law enforcement, and social and economic development in 15 regions where poverty, violence and illegal crops or drugs historically have converged.

The PNC and CSDI are based on the success of a pilot project undertaken with U.S. support in the La Macarena area of Meta Department, where coca cultivation is down 96 percent since 2005. Through CSDI, the U.S. supports civilian institution-building, rule of law, and alternative economic development along with security and counternarcotics. U.S. support for Colombia's drug interdiction includes strengthening aviation, ground security and police forces, and it has helped the government extend its presence where illegal crops are produced.